

California Activist '82

Bulletin of the Libertarian Party of California

109 Minna Street, Suite 252, San Francisco, CA 94105

May, 1982

INTRODUCING YOURSELF TO THE MEDIA

A Libertarian candidate is really a vehicle for presenting the libertarian message. An important part of educating the public about our ideas is the effective use of free media: newspaper, radio and television coverage.

As a candidate for partisan office in the general election, you can generate modest attention from the news media. As a Libertarian, however, you will have to work harder to capture that attention than a Republican or Democrat would. With your campaign bio, or fact sheet, completed and your photograph taken (see the April issue of California Activist '82), you are ready to take the next step.

Contacting Your Reporter

You will find that there are two distinct groups within each news organization: reporters (also known as political editors) who cover political races or have special political columns, and the editorial board, which establishes editorial policy and can endorse candidates. As an unknown, third-party candidate, your priority should be to make contact with the political reporters.

To find out whom to contact, call up your local newspapers, etc., and ask the assignment editor or political editor: "Who at KLIV is covering my race?"

Visit in Person

Once you have a reporter's name, make an appointment to meet him or her in person. Reporters usually cover several items a day, and you need to get their attention if you want to be one of these items. A personal meeting helps the newsmen to learn more about you now and possibly to remember you when your news releases start appearing later.

As Libertarians, we are distinctive--which makes good copy--but not well known to the public--which does little for circulation. If the news people do not know you personally, they are more likely to treat you as just another minor party candidate. Try to avoid this relegation to obscurity.

When you visit the media, bring your campaign bio, photograph, and, if you wish, a campaign statement (a one-page statement about your race, why you are running and your comments on the two or at most three major issues you are addressing in your campaign--some of which may be incorporated in your bio). Because the person you are meeting is very busy, it is quite possible that he or she will use your written material to supplement what is discussed in the interview.

Remember that your first interview is an introduction to:

- 1) Get acquainted
- 2) Share some brief information about your campaign
- 3) Talk about libertarian solutions to current problems (not why you are the best or most interesting personality in the race)
- 4) Find out what interests the reporter about the Libertarian Party, the current political scene, or your particular race.

Other Things You Can Do

If you have a less active campaign, you may not have the time to visit the media personally. Keep copies of your bio and picture on hand anyway. When the news media requests this information, send it out right away, and, if you can, try to meet with at least that particular reporter personally.

Some candidates may feel that they have time and resources to send out a brief news release with their biography and picture. There is a good chance that your information will be misrouted or misplaced if you have not already made personal contact. Instead of doing a mailing to every news organization in your area, you probably would be better off targeting two or three with a personal visit.

Build a Media Kit

Finally, your fact sheet and picture will become an integral part of your media kit. As the campaign progresses, you will add to the media kit:

- 1) Campaign statement (one page preferably)
- 2) Recent news releases of a substantive nature
- 3) A recent brochure if you have one
- 4) Literature from the statewide slate of candidates (which will probably be a piece on the gubernatorial or U.S. Senate candidate which lists the other statewide candidates).

Always have a couple of spare media kits available for future inquiries from the news media. You never know when your race may pop into the limelight.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ACTIVITIES

Southern California candidates, if you have not already done so, check in with the Los Angeles area LP office. Many activities for candidates are being scheduled there in the upcoming months, for example:

- 1) Rick Johns speaking on the relationship between foreign policy and economic policy, Sunday, June 6, at 5 P.M.
- 2) Other training programs are being planned for June, discussing campaign scheduling and campaign management.
- 3) A volunteer program for high school students in which they can receive high school class credit for political work is being coordinated out of the office, mainly through Volunteer Coordinator Bob Lehman.

For further information about Southern California activities, contact the LP office at 1550 Westwood Blvd, phone 474-7865. The office is open every day from 10 A.M. to 8 P.M., except Tuesdays and Thursdays, when it is closed.

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You want facts? We've got 'em.

In this issue of the California Activist are some excerpts from fact sheets on the Peripheral Canal and on the Gann anti-crime initiative.

These fact sheets tell all about California's water system and its inheritance taxes. Know it all when it comes to Mayor Bradley or the state's welfare system. Use them in debates, in formulating campaign literature, or whatever.

The first 20 fact sheets have been prepared by Texas emigre Jeff Hummel and are available for \$2 (to cover photocopying and postage) courtesy of the Dougherty for Governor campaign. Send your \$2 to Fact Sheets, Libertarian Party of California, 109 Minna Street, Suite 252, San Francisco, CA 94105.

PERIPHERAL CANAL HOW TO ARGUE AGAINST THE CANAL

I. Do not get mired in technological issues. The numbers and statistics should only be used sparingly, to illustrate theoretical points. Too many numbers will swamp an audience. A speaker should be familiar with the statistical data so he or she can answer questions or handle debates, but the central focus of any criticism of the Canal should be theoretical.

II. Theoretical Points.

- A. Government intervention has blessed California with a system of water feudalism. This system results in:
 1. The misallocation of water;
 2. An overcapitalization or overinvestment in water facilities and projects;
 3. Subsidies to agricultural interests.
- B. The features of the California water industry that generate misallocation, overcapitalization, and subsidies include:
 1. Taxation.
 - Federal taxes for the Bureau of Reclamation projects.
 - Water district property taxes for state and local projects.
 - Tidelands Oil and Gas Revenues for the State Water Project.
 2. Artificially inexpensive borrowing.
 3. Discriminatory water prices that result from prohibitions and roadblocks to the transfer of water.
 4. Artificially inexpensive electrical costs.
 5. The uncompensated cost of environmental damage to private property rights.
 6. Eminent domain, through which land is obtained for water projects.
- C. The Peripheral Canal will perpetuate and expand this system of water feudalism. It is a plan to take the water of northern Californians, get southern Californians to pay for it, and give it to agribusiness in the San Joaquin Valley.
- D. What is needed is a comprehensive water reform that will result in a free market for water. On the market, there will be no shortages of water. Economists have been criticizing the California water system for years, and have been calling, almost universally, for the introduction of market allocation.
 1. Potential interim reforms:
 - a. Abolition of the power of water districts to tax.
 - b. Abolition of all restrictions upon the exchange of water between water districts and within them.
 - c. Adoption of marginal pricing by water bureaucracies.
 2. Ultimate solution: Complete separation of water and state.
 - a. Abolition of all water districts.
 - b. Privatization of the State Water Project, Central Valley Project, and other water delivery systems.
 - c. Establishment of an efficient system of private water rights, both for surface and groundwater, with water from such rights and the rights themselves transferable on the market.

PROPOSITION 8 (The Gann Initiative)

Analysis.

A. Provisions that are strongly libertarian.

Restitution: If faithfully implemented, without increasing the tax burden, this provision would result in a sweeping reform of the state's criminal justice system in a libertarian direction. Much depends, unfortunately, upon how the legislature implements this provision, and upon how the clause "unless compelling and extraordinary reasons exist to the contrary" is interpreted.

B. Provisions that are mildly libertarian.

Diminished capacity and insanity: The abolition of diminished capacity defense has already been substantially implemented, while the insanity defense restriction is not strong enough.

Victim's statements: This trivial move towards recognition of the rights of the victim will probably just increase administrative costs and bureaucratic red tape.

Youthful offenders: This provision takes a small step towards eliminating the false distinction between juvenile and adult crime.

Sex offenders: This provision is of no value since it has already been enacted.

C. Provisions that are neutral from a libertarian perspective.

Plea bargaining: Libertarians could support a restriction upon plea bargaining that recognized the right of the victim, which this provision does not. Otherwise, a limitation on plea bargaining must be judged according to its outcome. If effective, it will result in some individuals being convicted of more serious offenses than they otherwise would, while other individuals will not be convicted at all, when they otherwise would. Depending on whether the conviction is for a victimless crime or for a serious rights violation, either of these outcomes could be desirable or undesirable.

D. Provisions that are mildly unlibertarian.

Prior convictions: Any loosening of the restrictions upon evidence that can be introduced in court is dangerous from a libertarian perspective.

Sentencing: Increasing the prison terms of even habitual criminals is not the solution. It does not move towards restitution, and it increases the cost to the taxpayer. This provision may not have much impact, because judges might reduce their sentences to compensate for the mandated increases.

E. Provisions that are strongly unlibertarian.

Safe schools: This dangerously vague and stupid provision opens a veritable Pandora's box. At best, it will cost the taxpayers millions in lawsuits brought by those who feel that the public education system did not fulfill their "inalienable right" to safe schools.

Evidence: This is the most important, and worst, provision of the entire initiative. In an ideal libertarian system of criminal justice, where only rights violations were prosecuted, and where full restitution was provided for the unlawful actions of law enforcement officials, the source of evidence would be immaterial, and the exclusionary rule would be unnecessary. In the real world, however, where law enforcement officials have effective immunity, and where they often prosecute victimless crimes, the rule excluding illegal evidence is an irreplaceable safeguard. Conservatives may cheer when illegal evidence is used to prosecute drug cases, which is where this provision will undoubtedly do its greatest initial mischief, but they will not be so pleased when illegally obtained evidence is used to convict people for violating some future gun control law, such as the initiative that will most certainly appear on November's ballot.

Bail: This provision practically demands preventive detention and makes Proposition 4 look circumscribed and liberal by comparison.

F. Administrative and fiscal impact.

The Gann initiative has been aptly described as the Lawyers Full Employment Act. It is so shoddily worded in many places that it will insure years of litigation about its meaning.

It will increase court and administrative costs, exacerbate overcrowding in the prisons, and further clog the criminal justice system. Judged on the basis of its own goal, deterring the criminal, whatever it gains through increasing the severity of punishment it will probably lose through a decline in the swiftness of punishment.

The Legislative Analyst concludes that passage of the initiative would result in major, but incalculable, new burdens upon the taxpayer.

Libertarian position: emphatic NO!

California Activist '82

UPCOMING ISSUES

We envision many more exciting issues of California Activist '82 between now and November, including articles discussing how to research your opposition, fundraising approaches, background on California politics, and analyses of the specific issues that gain importance as the campaign progresses. BUT: all our good intentions cannot be fulfilled without MONEY, and lots of it. A minimal issue costs about \$60 to print and mail, and we would like to expand the number of pages if possible. YOU can help, in several different ways: first, consider "buying" a whole issue of California Activist '82. If you send us at least \$60, earmarked for the party newsletter, we will dedicate an entire issue to you, and Libertarians throughout the state will be grateful for your contribution to the cause of liberty. Second, if you can't afford a single large donation, make your gift less painful by pledging a monthly amount to the Party on the enclosed pledge card. We will remind you of your pledge each month via a letter letting you know what's happening in the LFC. Third, recruit other supporters to join you in providing financial assistance for this newsletter and our other projects.

Send article information and contributions to:

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TROUBLED BY EQUAL TIME?

Are you a Libertarian candidate who has been put off by the media using the "equal time rule" as an excuse?

Radio and TV stations will often say that they WOULD cover Libertarian candidates but they don't want to have to have their opponents on. This excuse is used particularly before the primary when Democratic and Republican candidates abound. But we have news for them!

During the primary campaign, they need not offer anyone else equal time as long as you are unopposed in the Libertarian primary. Section 315 of FCC regulations states that equal time need only be given to opponents within a party for the primary campaign.

You have only a few weeks to take advantage of this loophole, so act now. For full explanation of these regulations and a copy of the regulations, call Eric Garriss at (415) 864-0952.

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